

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1 (currently amended). A method of playing ~~a game of~~ an electronic bingo game, ~~the method comprising the steps of:~~

- (a) defining a set of bingo balls;
- (b) providing a central computer, ~~said central computer~~ being programmed to randomly draw bingo balls from the defined set of bingo balls;
- (c) providing a plurality of gaming terminals, ~~said gaming terminals~~ operatively coupled to ~~said~~ the central computer ~~to communicate so that~~ the bingo balls drawn by the central computer can be communicated to the gaming terminals, each of the gaming terminals being operable by a player;
- (d) enrolling a plurality of players in the electronic bingo game, each ~~player~~ of the players enrolling by placing a wager at his gaming terminal, ~~the step of enrolling each player further comprising and~~ displaying a bingo card on each ~~player's~~ of the players' gaming terminal, each ~~of said bingo cards~~ card comprising a matrix, ~~each matrix~~ having a plurality of randomly arranged indicia, ~~each indicia~~ corresponding to at least one of the bingo balls in the defined set of bingo balls;
- (e) allotting each ~~player~~ of the players a defined number of selectively activated daubs;

- (f) randomly drawing a first group of bingo balls from the set of bingo balls;
- (g) displaying ~~said the~~ the first group of bingo balls on each of the gaming terminal terminals;
- (h) determining for each of the gaming terminal terminals any matches between the indicia of each bingo card on ~~said~~ each of the gaming terminals and the first group of bingo balls drawn;
- (i) allowing each ~~player~~ of the players to individually select for daubing a number of the matching indicia from the first draw, the number of matching indicia each of the player players is allowed to select being any number at each of the player's players' option between zero and all of the defined number of selectively activated daubs, where the decision to select or not select a matching indicia is a strategic decision;
- (j) if any of the players has used less than all of his defined number of selectively activated daubs resulting from the first group of bingo balls drawn, drawing an additional bingo ball and automatically daubing the matching indicia on the bingo card of each of the players that has at least one remaining selectively activated daub;
- (k) repeating step (j) until each of the players has used all of his defined number of selectively activated daubs;

- (l) checking the bingo cards of each of the players to determine if the matching indicia that have been daubed on each card completes at least one of a defined first set of bingo patterns; and
- (m) paying each of the players who has completed a defined bingo pattern a defined payout.

2. CANCELLED.

3 (currently amended). The method of claim 1 ~~2~~, further comprising ~~the steps of~~:

- (n) defining a second set of bingo patterns as a game-ending patterns;
- (o) ~~to the extent no player~~ if none of the players has yet completed a game-ending pattern, drawing additional bingo balls and daubing the matching indicia on each ~~player's~~ of the players' bingo card until at least ~~one~~ a first player has completed a game-ending pattern;
- (p) paying the first player who has completed a defined game-ending pattern a defined payout.

4 (currently amended). The method of claim 3, wherein at least one of the game-ending patterns is different than any of the ~~bingo patterns defined by~~ the first set of bingo patterns.

5 (previously presented). The method of claim 3, wherein all of the game-ending patterns are included in the first set of bingo patterns.

6 (currently amended). The method of claim 3, wherein at least one of the game-ending ~~patterns~~ patterns is included in the first set of bingo patterns.

7 (currently amended). The method of claim 3, wherein prior to any of the first group of bingo balls ~~ball~~ being drawn, ~~the~~ an expected value associated with the first set of bingo patterns is greater than ~~the~~ an expected value associated with the ~~set of~~ game-ending patterns.

8 (currently amended). The method of ~~claim 0~~ claim 7, wherein ~~the ratio of~~ the expected value associated with the first set of bingo patterns to the expected value associated with the set of game-ending patterns ~~is~~ has a ratio greater than 16:1.

9 (currently amended). The method of ~~claim 0~~ claim 7, wherein ~~the ratio of~~ the expected value associated with the first set of bingo patterns to the expected value associated with the set of game-ending patterns ~~is~~ has a ratio greater than 32:1.

10 (currently amended). The method of ~~claim 0~~ claim 7, wherein ~~the ratio of~~ the expected value associated with the first set of bingo patterns to the expected value associated with the set of game-ending patterns ~~is~~ has a ratio greater than 100:1.

11 (currently amended). The method of claim 3, wherein ~~the number of balls drawn in~~ the first group of balls ~~drawn~~ is

greater than or equal to in number than the defined number of selectively activated daubs.

12 (currently amended). The method of ~~claim 0~~ claim 11, wherein a set of auxiliary symbols is defined and an auxiliary symbol is associated with each of the matching indicia; the auxiliary symbols carrying information thereon and being displayed on each ~~player's~~ of the players' game terminal such that ~~a player~~ each of the players can evaluate his progress toward completing at least one of the defined bingo patterns.

13 (currently amended). The method of ~~claim 0~~ claim 12, wherein a standard deck of playing cards is used as the auxiliary symbols; each matrix is at least 4X13 in size, with each row of the matrix associated with a suit of playing cards and each column of the matrix is incrementally associated with a rank of playing cards, such that each cell of the matrix is associated with exactly one playing card; the set of bingo balls is 52 in number; the first group of bingo balls drawn is 5 in number and each ~~player~~ of the players is allotted 5 selectively activated daubs.

14 (currently amended). The method of ~~claim 0~~ claim 13, wherein a plurality of the defined bingo patterns and the playing cards associated with each such pattern form a poker hand of a standard ranking.

15 (currently amended). The method of ~~claim 0~~ claim 14, wherein ~~the ratio of~~ the expected value associated with the first set of bingo patterns to the expected value associated with the set of game-ending patterns ~~is~~ has a ratio greater than 16:1.

16 (currently amended). A method of playing ~~a game of an~~ electronic bingo game, ~~the method comprising the steps of:~~

- (a) defining a set of at least 52 bingo balls;
- (b) providing a central computer, ~~said central computer~~ being programmed to randomly draw bingo balls from the defined set of bingo balls;
- (c) providing a plurality of gaming terminals, ~~said gaming terminals~~ operatively coupled to said the central computer ~~to communicate so that~~ the bingo balls drawn by the network central computer can be communicated to the gaming terminals, each of the gaming terminals being operable by a player;
- (d) enrolling a plurality of players in the electronic bingo game, each player of the players enrolling by placing a wager at his gaming terminal;
- (e) upon enrolling, the gaming terminal displays a bingo card, ~~said bingo card~~ comprising a matrix which is at least 4X13 in size, and having a plurality of randomly arranged indicia corresponding to the bingo balls in the defined set of bingo balls;
- (f) assigning a set of auxiliary symbols corresponding to each position within at least a 4X13 portion of the

- matrix wherein a standard deck of playing cards is used as the auxiliary symbols;
- (g) allotting each player at least five selectively activated daubs;
 - (h) randomly drawing a first group of at least 5 bingo balls from the set of bingo balls;
 - (i) displaying ~~said~~ the first group of bingo balls on each of the gaming terminals;
 - (j) determining for each of the gaming terminals any matches between the indicia of each bingo card on ~~said terminals~~ each of the gaming terminals and the first group of bingo balls drawn; ~~and~~
 - (k) allowing each ~~player~~ of the players to individually select for daubing a number of the matching indicia in the at least 4X13 portion of the matrix from the first draw, the number of matching indicia each of the players is allowed to select being any number at each of the ~~player's~~ players' option between zero and all of the defined number of selectively activated daubs, where the decision to select or not select a matching indicia is a strategic decision;
 - (l) if any of the players has used less than all of his defined number of selectively activated daubs resulting from the first group of bingo balls drawn, drawing an additional bingo ball and automatically daubing the matching indicia on the bingo card of each of the players that has at least one remaining selectively activated daub;

- (m) repeating step (l) until each of the players has used all of his defined number of selectively activated daubs;
- (n) checking the bingo cards of each of the players to determine if the matching indicia that have been daubed on each card completes at least one of a defined first set of bingo patterns; and
- (o) paying each of the players who has completed a defined bingo pattern a defined payout.

17 CANCELLED.

18 (currently amended). The method of claim 16 ~~17,~~ further comprising ~~the steps of:~~

- (p) defining a second set of bingo patterns as a game-ending patterns;
- (q) ~~to the extent no player~~ if none of the players has yet completed a game-ending pattern, drawing additional bingo balls and daubing the matching indicia on each ~~player's~~ of the players' bingo card until at least ~~one~~ a first player has completed a game-ending pattern; and
- (r) paying the first player who has completed a defined game-ending pattern a defined payout.

19 (currently amended) The method of claim 18, wherein prior to any of the first group of bingo balls being drawn, ~~the~~ an

expected value associated with the first set of bingo patterns is greater than ~~the~~ an expected value associated with the set of game-ending patterns.

20 (currently amended) The method of claim 19, wherein ~~the ratio of~~ the expected value associated with the first set of bingo patterns to the expected value associated with the set of game-ending patterns ~~is~~ has a ratio greater than 16:1.